

# Fact sheet: Home based business



## Can I have a home based business in Yarra Ranges?

Yarra Ranges Council is proud to be a Small Business Friendly Council and seeks to encourage and support our residents in the establishment and on-going development of home-based businesses. Our dedicated and friendly Small Business Office can assist with the range of requirements, guidelines and information that may apply to your particular business.

We work with you from the beginning to understand your business vision and help guide you through the step by step application process. Starting with the pre-application checklist, which provides a summary of the permits and registrations you may need, this enables you to plan and research your requirements before you apply. If you require multiple permits we can arrange a pre-application support meeting with you and relevant council departments to give you consolidated advice on what you may need to include in your application. We then have a streamlined single application form for all the permits and registrations you may need. You will also have a single point of contact assigned to keep you updated along the way.

*A home based business could be small businesses that operate from the home such as hairdressing, personal training, beauty services or food businesses or consultants and tradespeople with a home office. Depending on the type of business there are certain requirements. Therefore it is important to contact council to discuss your particular circumstances.*

## What registrations, licences and permits will I need?

The registrations, licences and permits you need, will depend on the business you are running, what activities your business will be undertaking and the zoning of your property.

The Australian Business Licence and Information Service ([ABLIS](#)) is a great place to start collecting information on any license, registration and permit that may be required for your business at your specific address. For some of these you will need to apply through external agencies, for example with the [Australian Government Business Registration Service](#) you can register a business name, Australian Business Number (ABN), company name/number, for GST and other taxes.

For all council related permits and registrations you can contact our Small Business Office by phone, [email](#) or fill in the [Pre-Application Checklist](#) to find out what may be required. These may include:

- Planning – permits relating to use of land, use of building for business, displaying signs and other statutory planning requirements
- Building – permits that relate to the method of construction of a building or development, and the use of the building to ensure it meets relevant building codes.
- Health – registrations and certificates for food premises, health, beauty and accommodation premises. Could include registration and certificates required for wastewater and septic systems.
- Engineering – permits relating to traffic management, car parking, drainage, stormwater
- Community Safety - includes roadside trading permits, domestic animal business permits, and footpath trading permits for furniture, display items or A frames placed on the footpath or on council land.

## Will I need a planning permit?

Operating a home based business within Yarra Ranges you will need to comply with the [Yarra Ranges Planning Scheme \(52.11\)](#), see following for a summary and please refer to scheme for details.

A home based business must:

- be your main place of residence.
- have no more than two people working in the business who do not live in the home.
- not use more than (net floor area) 100 square meters, or one-third of the total floor area of the home, whichever is the lesser
- not use more power, gas, water than normal domestic usage.
- not negatively impact the neighbourhood e.g. appearance, creating excessive noise, parking of cars, transporting of materials/goods to and from the home, hours of operation, electrical interference, storage of hazardous materials, emissions from site.
- not modify or service motor vehicles
- have only one commercial vehicle, not exceeding two tonnes capacity and registered to a resident of the home
- only sell goods manufactured or serviced in the home based business (this doesn't apply to goods offered for sale online).
- Store within a building, all materials used or goods manufactured, serviced or repaired in the home based business
- not display goods manufactured, serviced or repaired so they're visible from outside the property.
- not have goods sold online collected from the home

A permit may be granted for a home based business which:

- allows no more than 3 people who do not live in the home to work in the business at any one time.
- has a floor area not exceeding 200 square metres or one-third of the net floor area of the home, whichever is the lesser.
- allows no more than 1 additional commercial vehicle (a commercial goods vehicle, commercial passenger vehicle or tow truck within the meaning of the Transport Act 1983), not exceeding 2 tonnes capacity and with or without a trailer registered to a resident of the home, to be present at any time.

Refer to link above for planning scheme details.

Our “Do I need a planning permit?” resource can further assist [yrc.vic.gov.au/planningpermit](http://yrc.vic.gov.au/planningpermit)

## Will I need a health or food registration?

The Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008 requires all health related and prescribed accommodation premises to be registered with Council.

Health-related businesses include personal care and body art businesses that provide hairdressing and beauty treatments.

Prescribed accommodation includes rooming and boarding houses, motels, hostels and caravan parks.

For further information visit [Starting a new health related business](#).

Under the Food Act 1984 you must register your food business with Council if you want to prepare and/or store food. There are many requirements associated with running a successful food business and this will be dependent on the type of food you are wanting to make and sell. An Environmental Health Officer can provide advice regarding the appropriate layout of your food business and advise you on legislative requirements you may have to adhere to.

For further information please visit [Food Businesses](#) on our website or contact us.

## Will I need a building permit?

If you are planning on carrying out any building work or structural building works or changing the use of your home for your home based business you may require a building permit.

Check the “Do I need a building permit” for further information

[yrc.vic.gov.au/buildingpermit](http://yrc.vic.gov.au/buildingpermit)

## What about signage?

### Advertising signs

You can erect one non-illuminated home occupation sign up to 0.2 square metres without planning approval. While signs in excess of 0.2square metres require a planning permit, Council's planning policies do not support larger signs for home businesses, to protect residential amenity.

### A-Frame signage

You will need to apply for a Roadside Trading Permit if you are looking at placing an A-Frame sign outside of your property boundary.

## What else do I need to know about setting up a home based business?

### “Starting your business” workshop

We highly recommend attending the Small Business Victoria workshop, “Starting your business: How to turn an idea into a business”. It covers essential knowledge on getting ready to take your business from idea to reality and onwards to success. You can check our [events page](#) for the next available date or find more details on the [Small Business Victoria website](#).

### Insuring your business

It's essential that your business is adequately insured, most people are unaware that a standard Home and Contents policy will not cover most home-based business. Get advice from your insurer about the correct type and amount of additional insurance you may need. As well as insuring your premises and contents against everyday risks, the following insurances could also be critical: Public liability, product liability, professional indemnity, motor vehicle, Victorian Work Cover Authority insurance, personal injury and income protection.

Business Victoria has [information and a checklist](#) on which insurances may apply to your business.

### Tax deductions for home based business

When you operate some or all of your business from your home, you may be able to claim tax deductions runnings and occupancy expenses, the ATO has a great fact sheet available (see below) or seek advice from your accounting professional. [ATO Home based business expenses](#).

### Be prepared and know how to recover from an emergency situation or natural disaster

Living and working in the Yarra Ranges, it's important that your business thinks about staff and customers, as well as suppliers and how you would be impacted if there was a threat to your area. [Use the Business Victoria resource to prepare an emergency management plan](#).

## Succeeding in business

We offer friendly professional assistance and are committed to helping and supporting you in your business. There are great resources on our website relating to the stages you are at, from idea/concept to growth or you can contact us for more information on the wide array of support available for you.

### Research and Planning:

- [Start with a Plan](#): Research your idea and your market and prepare a business plan - [Business Victoria business plan template](#). Use [Know your market](#) for key demographic and economic information.
- Get financially savvy – use these checklists and links to help set up your finances the right way from the get-go: [Business Victoria – Setting up your finances](#). The ATO offers free webinars for small business on topics like bookkeeping, payroll and superannuation – [click here](#).
- [Develop a marketing plan](#) – use these free resources to get started [Is your business digital ready?](#) and [Business Victoria Marketing Plan Template](#).
- If you're increasing your business digital footprint, it's critical you look after your cyberhealth. Have a look at Business Victoria's [cybersecurity tips here](#).

## Developing and Growing:

- Access your local industry networks. Networking is an important way of building business skills, knowledge and develop business to business links and relationships, especially when your home based this can vital. There are many networking groups in our local region, visit our [“Connect with others”](#) page or contact us to find out more.
- Connect in with our [Be Kind campaign](#) supporting Being Kind to business, people and yourself in Yarra Ranges. You can enter your business details in the [Be Kind to Business directory](#).
- [Is your business accessible?](#) Accessible tourism is the ongoing endeavour to ensure tourist destinations, products and services are accessible to all people, regardless of their physical limitations, disabilities or age
- [Learn and develop skills through workshops and seminars](#)
  - ASBAS digital solutions program offers webinars for online business needs like social media & marketing.
  - Small Business Victoria Workshops - [Check on our events calendar for upcoming workshops](#).
  - [Small business mentoring](#) session - free service with an experienced mentor and business professional who can assist you with questions & offer advice
- [Stay informed](#) – stay in contact with us and be the first to know new events and other news - Follow us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) or [subscribe to our eNews](#).

## COVID-19 Business Resources

For important information about staying safe, compliant and operating your business during Covid-19, see our web page [Yarra Ranges Business COVID-19 Support](#) or call our COVID-19 hotline [1300 368 333](#).

Please refer to our [Be Kind Yarra Ranges](#) pages for specific information and resources regarding operating your business within a COVID-19 Safe environment.

### **Look after your wellbeing**

Running a business can sometimes be stressful, its crucial to look after your own wellbeing as well as that of your staff. There are so many resources to help, you could start here with [Beyond Blue's guides to working from home](#) or call lifeline on 131114.